

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-23 (Canceled)

Claim 24 (Previously Presented) The liquid pressure transfer method of claim 45, wherein a relative movement speed between the loop shaped workpiece and the transfer film is set so that an immersion rate of the loop shaped workpiece and a feed rate of the transfer film can be maintained substantially equal.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented) The liquid pressure transfer method of claim 24, wherein a deflection angle defined between a plane in which the loop shaped direction extends and a relative movement direction of the transfer film is set to be within a range of plus or minus 90 degrees.

Claim 26 (Canceled)

Claim 27 (Previously Presented) The liquid pressure transfer method of claim 24, wherein:
the loop shaped workpiece comprises a steering wheel component having a transfer-not-required portion;

said downwardly immersing comprises initially immersing the steering wheel component in the transfer liquid at the transfer-not-required portion; and

said moving the loop shaped workpiece in the loop shaped direction comprises rotating the steering wheel component while maintaining the attitude of the workpiece to the surface of the transfer liquid the same at the transfer initiating site during transfer of the transfer pattern.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented) The liquid pressure transfer method of claim 24, wherein:
the loop shaped workpiece comprises a steering wheel component having a front side and a rear side, the front side defined as being intended to face a driver's seat when mounted on a vehicle and the rear side defined as being substantially out of view from a driver's seat when mounted on a vehicle; and

said downwardly immersing comprises immersing the steering wheel component such that the transfer pattern is transferred to the surface of the steering wheel component with a joint line of the transfer pattern formed on the rear surface of the steering wheel component.

Claim 29 (Canceled)

Claim 30 (Previously Presented) The liquid pressure transfer method of claim 45, wherein a deflection angle defined between a plane in which the loop shaped direction extends and a relative movement direction of the transfer film is set to be within a range of plus or minus 90 degrees.

Claim 31 (Canceled)

Claim 32 (Previously Presented) The liquid pressure transfer method of claim 30, wherein:
the loop shaped workpiece comprises a steering wheel component having a transfer-not-required portion;

said downwardly immersing comprises initially immersing the steering wheel component in the transfer liquid at the transfer-not-required portion; and

said moving the loop shaped workpiece in the loop shaped direction comprises rotating the steering wheel component while maintaining the attitude of the workpiece to the surface of the transfer liquid the same at the transfer initiating site during transfer of the transfer pattern.

Claim 33 (Previously Presented) The liquid pressure transfer method of claim 30, wherein:
the loop shaped workpiece comprises a steering wheel component having a front side and a rear side, the front side defined as being intended to face a driver's seat when mounted on a vehicle and the rear side defined as being substantially out of view from a driver's seat when mounted on a vehicle; and

said downwardly immersing comprises immersing the steering wheel component such that the transfer pattern is transferred to the surface of the steering wheel component with a joint line of the transfer pattern formed on the rear surface of the steering wheel component.

Claims 34-38 (Canceled)

Claim 39 (Previously Presented) The liquid pressure transfer method of claim 45, wherein:

the loop shaped workpiece comprises a steering wheel component having a transfer-not-required portion;

said downwardly immersing comprises initially immersing the steering wheel component in the transfer liquid at the transfer-not-required portion; and

said moving the loop shaped workpiece in the loop shaped direction comprises rotating the steering wheel component while maintaining the attitude of the workpiece to the surface of the transfer liquid the same at the transfer initiating site during transfer of the transfer pattern.

Claim 40 (Previously Presented) The liquid pressure transfer method of claim 39, wherein:

the steering wheel component having a front side and a rear side, the front side defined as being intended to face a driver's seat when mounted on a vehicle and the rear side defined as being substantially out of view from a driver's seat when mounted on a vehicle; and

said downwardly immersing comprises immersing the steering wheel component such that the transfer pattern is transferred to the surface of the steering wheel component with a joint line of the transfer pattern formed on the rear surface of the steering wheel component.

Claim 41 (Canceled)

Claim 42 (Previously Presented) The liquid pressure transfer method of claim 45, wherein:

the loop shaped workpiece comprises a steering wheel component having a front side and a rear side, the front side defined as being intended to face a driver's seat when mounted on a vehicle

and the rear side defined as being substantially out of view from a driver's seat when mounted on a vehicle; and

said downwardly immersing comprises immersing the steering wheel component such that the transfer pattern is transferred to the surface of the steering wheel component with a joint line of the transfer pattern formed on the rear surface of the steering wheel component.

Claims 43-44 (Canceled)

Claim 45 (Previously Presented) A liquid pressure transfer method, comprising:

supporting a transfer film on a surface of a transfer liquid by floating the transfer film on the liquid, wherein the transfer film has a transfer pattern for decoration printed thereon;

downwardly immersing a loop shaped workpiece in the transfer liquid so as to transfer the transfer film to a surface of the loop shaped workpiece for decorating the workpiece such that a plane of the surface of the transfer liquid at a transfer initiating site extends through the loop shaped workpiece;

wherein the loop shaped workpiece has a loop shaped direction in which the workpiece extends and a thickness direction which is perpendicular to the loop shaped direction in which the workpiece extends;

wherein said downwardly immersing comprises moving the loop shaped workpiece along the loop shaped direction in which the workpiece extends at the transfer initiating site so as to continuously immerse the loop shaped workpiece in the transfer liquid while maintaining the attitude of the workpiece to the surface of the transfer liquid the same such that a circumference of a cross section of the loop shaped workpiece, taken in the thickness direction of the loop shaped workpiece, is substantially concurrently contacted with the transfer film at the transfer initiating site;

wherein the transfer initiating site is at a position at which a portion of the loop shaped workpiece which is located above the surface of the transfer liquid, with another portion of the loop shaped workpiece immersed in the transfer liquid, is first brought into contact with the transfer film

by moving the loop shaped workpiece along the loop shaped direction so as to continuously immerse the loop shaped workpiece in the transfer liquid; and

moving at least one of the loop shaped workpiece and the transfer film during said downwardly immersing such that a portion of the transfer film which has not yet been used for transfer printing can be used for transfer printing.

Claim 46 (Previously Presented) The liquid pressure transfer method of claim 45, wherein said downwardly immersing the loop shaped workpiece in the transfer liquid is carried out in such a manner that the transfer film laps on the workpiece while a line, which is defined on the transfer film as being normal to a direction of relative movement of the transfer film with respect to the loop shaped workpiece, substantially conforms to the circumference of the section of the workpiece in the thickness direction.

Claim 47 (Previously Presented) The liquid pressure transfer method of claim 24, wherein said downwardly immersing the loop shaped workpiece in the transfer liquid is carried out in such a manner that the transfer film laps on the workpiece while a line, which is defined on the transfer film as being normal to a direction of relative movement of the transfer film with respect to the loop shaped workpiece, substantially conforms to the circumference of the section of the workpiece in the thickness direction.

Claim 48 (Previously Presented) The liquid pressure transfer method of claim 25, wherein said downwardly immersing the loop shaped workpiece in the transfer liquid is carried out in such a manner that the transfer film laps on the workpiece while a line, which is defined on the transfer film as being normal to a direction of relative movement of the transfer film with respect to the loop shaped workpiece, substantially conforms to the circumference of the section of the workpiece in the thickness direction.